

From: [David Kraemer](#)
To: [Covid Affiliate Archives](#)
Subject: Fwd: One Person's Response to Communal Fear 8.28.20
Date: Friday, August 28, 2020 12:43:38 PM

Begin forwarded message:

From: Morris Allen <mojo210al@icloud.com>
Subject: One Person's Response to Communal Fear 8.28.20
Date: August 28, 2020 at 9:04:37 AM EDT
To: "mojo210al@gmail.com" <mojo210al@gmail.com>

NO WAGON WHEEL CENSUS Rain delayed walk necessitating a neighborhood tour

“Embracing my privilege while stoking your resentments.” That was the meta-message of the past 4 days of this TV spectacle. Violating every norm of the veil that had existed between governing and running for office, between policy and politics, we witnessed the trampling of norms while trashing the messaging that we were presented in last week's spectacle. It is dangerous to try to reduce the complexity of peoples lives into quick categories and sadly it is done all the time. And for the next 9 and ½ weeks, we will be witnessing an attempt to reduce the complexity of what is necessary to do in order to restore civility and hope in this country to a battle between privilege and resentment. Those constructs will be wrapped in lovely ways, but at the core we have arrived at a point where the profound nature of our large and diverse country has been reduced to this battle. And whoever prevails, it will not solve the sense of existential pain that so many of us are feeling about the world we are leaving to the next generation. For all of the benefits of the baby-boomer generation which we have been blessed, I fear the chickens are coming home to roost.

I spent 33 years of my life trying to figure out how to lead a community and what it took to ensure fidelity to one's people and to the world in which we live. What I discovered was that the most compelling message I could ever deliver was simply this, what people crave more than anything else in life is purpose and service. Without either, we are less and with both we are simply meeting the minimal standards set out for us as being created in the image of the Divine. And yet, for so many of us we have forsaken both for what I will call “pleasure and sport.” What is missing in the discussion that needs to be taking place in this country right now-is simply that. What is our purpose and what service are we capable of providing? With the constructs that have unfortunately been placed before us—privilege and resentment-I fear the outcome. With the constructs which are missing—purpose and service-I fear the consequences.

People are frightened by these past 6 months. Many have seen their work disappear, their health suffer and their lives upended. Families have lost love ones, and few of us are living the life we lived in the manner we lived it just one short year ago. We look

around and we see our life's work trashed and destroyed, our nest eggs compromised, our relationships tattered. And so, a campaign built on resentment will resonate for all too many—even without the undercurrent of stoking racial animus that is behind so much of it. For some, seekers of purpose and service—the call to address privilege sounds like a winner. We are still doing ok, we live in a good neighborhood, our jobs are coming back and so addressing what I have simply as a result of who I am seems like it addressed the call for purpose and service. I worry its reach is rather limited. With 180000 Americans that have died, with knowing that our vision of providing for our children that their lives will exceed the standards of our won—or at least match them, with seeing a world that is like December 1932 in Germany(note the month and year), thinking about “our privilege” doesn't really resonate at all. I would suggest that regardless of the outcome in November(and God help us if it is more of the same), I would hope that a different conversation emerges—not about class and socio-economic and racial standing; not about what someone is getting that I don't have—but about the real task of what it means to be a human being and the blessings and responsibilities that come with it. It needs to emerge inside the halls of Congress, the sanctuaries of faith, the walls of the White House and the kitchens of our homes. What is our purpose and how can I serve?

The loss of these constructs inside our lives has led to a serious rupture in the aspirational vision of our country. It has led to communities losing sight of their uniqueness. It has left too many individuals feeling alone and hopeless. And it has challenged the greatest teachings which have sustained humanity for centuries—protect the stranger, love your neighbor, teach your children, be a steward of the earth, enjoy the fruits of your labor and bless the Source of it all. Somehow, I know that privilege and resentment will prevail in the national debate, but I truly believe that absent seriously addressing purpose and service we are going to find ourselves deeper in the doo than we already are. Morris

(For new readers: these are unedited musings that are written following my morning walk. I give myself only the amount of time I take on my walk to write)

Sent by my iPad